# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 22 February 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Hendrik Wagenmakers (Netherlands)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 537th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

To begin with, I should like to extend a cordial welcome to the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, His Excellency Dr. Ferenc Somogyi, who is visiting the Conference today. Dr. Somogyi is a career diplomat with long experience in international organizations and, in particular, the United Nations. He was appointed State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in May 1989, and will be addressing the Conference for the first time since he took up his important functions. I am sure that the Conference will follow his statement with particular interest.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference continues today its consideration of agenda items 1, "Nuclear test ban", and 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". In conformity with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, however, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers today His Excellency the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary and the representatives of the German Democratic Republic and Kenya. Although the speakers' list as circulated shows four speakers, I understand that Ambassador Ledogar of the United States of America will actually be speaking at the next plenary meeting. I now give the floor to his Excellency the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Dr. Ferenc Somogyi.

Mr. SOMOGYI (Hungary): Mr. President, please allow me at the outset to say how honoured I am to have an opportunity to address the Conference on Disarmament - this unique and most significant body in the system of international disarmament machinery - for the first time. I would like to offer you my congratulations and those of the Hungarian delegation on your taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of February, and pledge to you the continuing co-operation of the Hungarian delegation in discharging your responsible duties. Presiding over the last but one plenary meeting, you may rightly claim a good deal of accomplishment in giving a good start to the 1990 session of the CD by successfully solving procedural and political problems as well as re-establishing subsidiary bodies. Like the speakers who have taken the floor before me, I would like, on behalf of the Hungarian delegation, to extend a hearty welcome to those distinguished heads of delegation who have recently joined the Conference and say goodbye to those who have left the CD since the closure of last year's session and wish them all the best in their future assignments.

The past year, and the past couple of months in particular, have produced sweeping and extensive political and social changes all over Europe, and especially in the central and eastern regions of the continent. These revoluntionary changes are aimed at eliminating centralized power structures and creating truly democratic societies in our part of the world. If we accept the notion that a State's internal situation and domestic policy fundamentally determine its activity in foreign relations, we can certainly conclude that these changes will have a favourable impact not only on European and East-West relations, but also on the system of international relations as

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a whole. In this system profound changes have started during the past five years that have - among other things - opened a new co-operative era in the relationship between the two major Powers as well. That new relationship, based on interdependence and the awareness of common interests, has brought tangible, generally recognized results in the field of international security and disarmament.

The positive dynamism of both Soviet-American and European relations is being felt most strikingly in the Vienna negotiations on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe. The unprecedented speed and intensity of the negotiating process provide clear evidence that genuine political will and commitment do produce progress and bring results. The maintaining of that impetus underscores the widespread and well-founded hopes that the first agreement on the reduction of European conventional forces can be concluded this year. For this hope to come true it is obvious that a number of problems have still to be overcome, which makes it imperative that an appropriate political impulse be given to the negotiating process.

From the very beginning of the Vienna talks on conventional disarmament and on building security and confidence, Hungary has sought to contribute to achieving progress and creating an atmosphere of trust. We put forward proposals at the negotiating table, announced unilateral disarmament measures a year ago, and provided data on a unilateral basis on the structure and deployment of certain elements of the Hungarian armed forces.

Perhaps it is not unknown to those present here that the Hungarian armed forces are undergoing a comprehensive transformation in harmony with our country's defence requirements and economic capabilities. In practice, this means that by the end of 1991 the Hungarian army will be reduced by 35 per cent and its structure changed in order to enhance its defensive character. An integral part of this process is the starting of the bilateral talks that my Government - unanimously supported by Parliament and the general public - has initiated on the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungarian territory this year or in 1991 at the latest. In our view, the reform of our armed forces and the withdrawal of Soviet troops will in no way adversely affect Hungary's defensive capabilities or those of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, but rather will contribute to the creation of security reflecting the new international situation. Hungarian representatives have given detailed information on these questions, supported by data, to participants in the Vienna forums, including the recently concluded seminar on military doctrines.

Our initiative to create a regional zone of security, confidence-building and co-operation with Yugoslavia and Austria is not directly linked to the Vienna negotiations, but it is guided by the same spirit. Under this initiative, the number of tanks stationed in a 50-kilometre-wide Hungarian zone along the borders of the three countries will be reduced by the end of the year by 50 per cent, that is 200 tanks, and further security-building and confidence-building measures going beyond those enshrined in the Stockholm Document will be introduced.

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In a spirit of military openness, and in addition to military data already provided at the CFE talks and the seminar on military doctrines, I now have pleasure in providing the Conference with comprehensive information on the Hungarian armed forces, which is being distributed along with the text of this statement.

Without going into details now I would just like to mention that the impact of the reform of the Hungarian armed forces is best reflected in the data on military expenditure. I wish to inform the Conference on Disarmament that the Ministry of Defence will have the sum of 44.6 billion forints at its disposal in fiscal year 1990, of which 40.0 billion will be allocated from the State budget and 4.6 billion is the planned income of the Ministry. This represents a 25 per cent decrease in real terms compared to the actual expenditure of the Ministry in 1989. At the same time it is to be noted that approximately 22 per cent of the total sum of 44.6 billion is not meant for direct defence purposes but for financing educational and social institutions belonging to the Ministry. I would like to mention here that the material I have referred to contains information on the financial resources available to the Ministry of Defence in 1990, compiled in conformity with the standardized reporting system on military budgets adopted by the United Nations.

The "open skies" régime, on which substantive negotiations have recently started in Ottawa, can also strengthen confidence and at the same time play a role in the verification of a future CFE agreement. We have supported the initiative from the very outset, and it was in that spirit that last January a pioneering experiment was carried out in Hungary in connection with this régime. As is well known, an unarmed aircraft from a NATO country, Canada, conducted a trial flight in Hungarian airspace on a flight path determined by Canadian specialists. The objective of the experiment was to gather technical flight experience relating to the verification system to be established under the "open skies" régime. Diplomatic and military experts from countries belonging to the two alliances were perfectly able to work together and gained positive experience. I believe that can be confirmed by our Canadian partners. At the end of January, in order to assess the results of the trial flight, we held an informal consultation in Budapest with the participation of experts from the 23 States that are to join the future régime. In accordance with the agreement which was reached at the conference in Ottawa, Budapest is to host the second and concluding phase of the "open skies" negotiations, during which the treaty on the régime is to be signed.

The process of international disarmament has always been determined by the positions and disarmament activities of the two major Powers. It is therefore a welcome fact that a positive picture is emerging not only at the European disarmament talks, but also at the various Soviet-American disarmament negotiations. There is a general expectation that an agreement on 50 per cent reductions in strategic offensive weapons will soon be ready for signature. One can hardly overestimate the significance of that agreement, which will certainly stimulate other disarmament efforts as well. Similarly, progress at the bilateral talks on the banning of chemical weapons appears to be encouraging.

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We can also welcome the fact that, as a result of three years of Soviet-American negotiations, the fate of the two bilateral treaties signed a decade and a half ago, but never ratified, can finally be settled. The verification protocols to be attached to the 1974 and 1976 treaties on the limitation of nuclear explosions for military and peaceful purposes appear to be ready for signing at the upcoming Soviet-American summit, and that would lead to the long-awaited ratification of the two treaties.

In contrast to the optimistic picture of the European disarmament process and the Soviet-American bilateral disarmament negotiations, the situation in multilateral disarmament looks distressing. There is an increasingly striking contradiction in our view, between the progress achieved in European regional disarmament and in the bilateral talks, on the one hand, and the lack of results in multilateral disarmament negotiations on the other. It is alarming that certain States, losing sight of the global aspects of the outstanding disarmament issues, do not wish to make use of the possibilities provided by multilateralism, thus precluding its machinery from contributing to the elaboration and implementation of comprehensive multilateral disarmament measures. From the other direction the lack of progress is exacerbated by stances that ignore present realities and demand immediate and comprehensive disarmament measures on the basis of an "all or nothing" approach, thus denying and consequently abandoning the possibility of achieving our common objectives in stages, through partial results.

Representatives of the Hungarian Government take every opportunity to express the firm view that in the long run, one cannot afford the lack of results in multilateral disarmament without casting doubt on the very existence of this institution. That can only be avoided by displaying political will and a constructive attitude. Hungary has always been ready to contribute to the viability of multilateral disarmament yielding practical and tangible results, since, as a small country, it cannot have any other interest than that of giving constant support to efforts aimed at demonstrating the usefulness of multilateral co-operation.

Undoubtedly the viability of multilateral disarmament can best be proved by the speedy elaboration and conclusion of the chemical weapons convention. This appears to be the only issue on which the Conference on Disarmament is conducting substantive negotiations with the well-founded hope that, despite existing political, military, industrial, legal and other problems, the agreement can be concluded soon.

It is an arduous task to summarize the efforts of the past two years as regards the banning of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles. Work in this area has become increasingly intensive over the years. Last year the Ad hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament dealing with the question of chemical weapons accomplished an unprecedented amount of work, which was also reflected in the inter-sessional meetings of the Committee. Thus, the general desire expressed at the Paris Conference for a redoubling of efforts aimed at concluding the chemical weapons convention has, in the literary sense of the word, been fulfilled. At the same time we cannot ignore the fact that, despite the enormous amount of work accomplished, no agreement has been reached on the key elements of the draft convention.

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This is all the more deplorable since last year we witnessed a number of promising events, such as the Paris Conference already mentioned or the commitment of the Canberra Conference to the cause of prohibiting chemical weapons.

The forty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly can also be cited here. At this session, American and Soviet statements heralded the sincere readiness of the two parties to radically reduce their chemical weapon stockpiles even before the conclusion of the convention. The meeting of the leaders of the two major Powers in Malta produced a further indication that an agreement on 80 per cent reductions in the two States' chemical weapon stockpiles could be concluded at the Soviet-American summit scheduled for early summer, and this was reaffirmed in the joint statement adopted at the recent Moscow meeting of their Foreign Ministers.

It is possible for the impact of these events to determine this year's activity in the Conference on Disarmament and enhance the prevailing optimism concerning the early conclusion of the chemical weapons convention. That requires the solution of such problems as the scope of the convention in its final form, or the unconditional prohibition of the use of chemical weapons, for example. Solving these questions could help finalize the technical, organizational and procedural aspects of the draft convention on the basis of the significant progress made so far.

A reliable verification system is a determining factor in the effective implementation of a future chemical weapons convention. The system, the main elements of which are already in place, will include the important mechanism of a non-refusable "challenge inspection". We believe that the useful idea of "ad hoc checks" could well be inserted into the existing structure of verification. This method of inspection based on an elaborate system of quotas could be an efficient part of the complex verification system and would provide the participating States with a further opportunity to display their openness and willingness to co-operate.

In this connection, we welcome and fully support the proposal officially put forward by the Foreign Minister of Austria at the opening session of the Conference on Disarmament that Austria should host the international organization to be set up under the terms of the future convention. Austria, which is not a full member of the Conference on Disarmament, has always displayed keen interest in a chemical weapons ban, and this new contribution provides further evidence of its commitment to the cause of the convention.

The Hungarian Government has repeatedly and concretely demonstrated its determination to promote actively, in every constructive way, the comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons, the destruction of their stockpiles, and the early conclusion of a convention thereon. This was manifested in the unilateral initiative put forward by our Foreign Minister at the recent session of the United Nations General Assembly, declaring Hungary's readiness to act in conformity with the future convention. That means that - besides reaffirming our chemical-weapon-free status - Hungary is ready to comply with all the provisions of the future convention even before it is concluded and enters into force. It also means that we intend to make a

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declaration on production, exports and imports of chemicals related to the convention. Furthermore, we are ready - on a reciprocal basis - to submit to verification the contents of that declaration, as well as our defence, industrial and trading activities relating to the convention. In accordance with that initiative, we hereby submit to the Conference document CD/969, containing a comprehensive declaration on production of and foreign trade in chemicals, as provided for in the relevant provisions of the convention.

I also wish to inform the Conference on Disarmament that as a part of the Hungarian initiative, a national body will be set up in the near future to continue the work which has been carried out informally in the last four years by an inter-departmental commission, and perform provisionally some of the duties of the national authority to be established in accordance with the convention. By operating this body, we intend to gather preliminary experience relating to the functioning of such a national authority.

The comprehensive nuclear test ban is formally high on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. Yet in the past couple of years all efforts aimed at setting up a subsidiary body on this item have proved futile. Those present here might agree that in past decades all the possible arguments in favour of a comprehensive test ban have been put forward in this hall, yet we still lack a multilateral legal instrument that would outlaw all nuclear explosions once and for all. This issue of wider importance in arms control and non-proliferation has, unfortunately, not yet secured the consent of certain nuclear-weapon States. We do hope that the signing of the already mentioned verification protocols to the threshold test-ban treaties will be followed by Soviet-American talks on further limiting the number and yield of nuclear test explosions. In spite of the difficulties encountered, the endeavours aimed at achieving a comprehensive nuclear test ban must not be abandoned. The key role of the CD in this field is evident and indispensable. Embarking on substantive work cannot be delayed in those areas where the realities make it possible, and the issue of verification is such an area.

It is to be hoped that an attitude based on realism and a spirit of compromise will prevail at the conference to be convened to consider amendments to the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty. In our view, the amendment conference could become a milestone in solving the problem of nuclear testing by contributing to the creation of an international consensus in favour of a comprehensive test ban. It is evident that the final solution can be envisaged only on a global scale with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States. We believe that every opportunity should be taken to promote politically the cause of a comprehensive nuclear test ban. But such activity must not lead to irrational confrontation which would hardly serve the achievement of our common objective.

The Hungarian Government has supported the prohibition of radiological weapons from the very outset. The draft treaty on the subject was tabled more than 10 years ago, but we are still far from signing an international agreement, despite the progress made in identifying problems. In our view, one of the most positive developments in the work of the Conference on Disarmament in this field was the recognition that the issue of the

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prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities should be addressed and settled. Dealing with the two issues together has failed to produce a satisfactory result. Without calling into question the importance of the prohibition of radiological weapons, it appears to be sensible to settle the issue of the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities, irrespective of the outcome of the negotiations on radiological weapons in the traditional sense. In our view, this tendency has been present in the practical activities of the ad hoc Committee of the CD on this topic in recent years. Unfortunately, the work carried out in this period could be summarized in its reports merely by recording the fact that differences in positions have presented themselves in a more and more visible form.

This lack of progress is certainly disappointing, since our interest in the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities stands on several pillars. While the States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty which have renounced the possession and acquisition of nuclear weapons have not yet received any international legal guarantee aimed at ensuring the security of peaceful nuclear facilities and of their activities, as provided for in article IV of the Treaty, it is alarming that attacks on nuclear facilities play an important role in planning war-fighting scenarios. It is a matter of concern that an attack launched against nuclear facilities, even by conventional weapons, would result in the discharge of radioactive material that would cause long-lasting damage to the country and society attacked. This risk is even more accentuated in the case of countries of a size and population density similar to Hungary's. We also maintain that the existing legal provisions stipulated in the 1977 Additional Protocol to the 1949 Geneva Conventions are insufficient.

In view of the above, the demand that a legal instrument prohibiting attacks on nuclear facilities and ensuring undisturbed peaceful nuclear activities should be drawn up cannot be considered unjustifiable. The most appropriate forum for the speedy elaboration of such an international treaty has yet to be found.

Finally, looking ahead somewhat, I would like to say a few words about a diplomatic event that is to take place this year, the outcome of which will largely determine the way we can think of the present and future of multilateral disarmament. The fourth review conference on the non-proliferation Treaty will provide an opportunity for States parties to the Treaty to reaffirm once again the outstanding political significance of that legal instrument in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, reducing the danger of nuclear war, strengthening international security and promoting the unlimited use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Despite the fact that the implementation of its individual articles has been uneven, the non-proliferation Treaty has proved to be an efficient tool in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The system of conferences to review implementation has helped to activate disarmament talks on the cessation of the arms race also. The fullest implementation of the provisions of the Treaty is in the interest of the international community, and of course in Hungary's interest too.

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The most contentious section of the treaty is undoubtedly article VI. It is undeniable, of course, that the objectives set forth therein could not be fully met during the years that have passed since the last review conference. Only initial, but politically significant steps have been taken by the two major Powers to curb the nuclear arms race and promote nuclear disarmament. On this basis, further serious efforts are needed not only on the part of the two major Powers and the other nuclear-weapon States, but also by the Conference on Disarmament, which demands a role of its own in the process.

At the same time, insistence on further results and failure to obtain them must not lead to the weakening of an international legal instrument that has fulfilled its main objectives and has a universal character. We cannot afford to eliminate a working institution from the politically fragile and incomplete infrastructure of multilateral disarmament. That cannot - we are convinced - be in the interest of either those who call others to account, or those who are called to account themselves. It would run particularly counter to the interest of mankind as a whole. Hungary, having suffered the consequences of two world conflagrations, has had the chance - together with a number of other nations - to learn the lesson: it is always much easier to destroy than to build or reconstruct.

In spite of the problems described above, we sincerely hope that through joint efforts we will be able to revitalize multilateral disarmament in order to integrate it into the multilateral institutions of the evolving new system of international relations. In this manner, multilateral disarmament can live up to the decade-long positive disarmament traditions and contribute to the attainment of further tangible results. Let me, in conclusion, assure you that the Republic of Hungary as well as our delegation to the Conference on Disarmament will continue to be ready to play an active and constructive role in order to reach this lofty goal.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary for his important statement and for the kind words that he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Dietze.

Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic): let me say first a word in tribute to your balanced and encouraging statement at the opening of the 1990 spring session of the Conference on Disarmament. I should like to congratulate you warmly on taking up your high and also responsible office, and wish you successful work. I am confident that under your able and efficient stewardship the Conference will be heading for a good start which will lead us to concrete results in the negotiating process. I wish you and the Secretary-General of our Conference much success in your business. You may rest assured of my delegation's full support.

The outgoing President, Ambassador Benhima, deserves our appreciation and gratitude for his profound commitment during the past period of work.

(Mr. Dietze, German Democratic Republic)

To all our colleagues who have taken up new assignments since the closure of the 1989 session, I wish success in the discharge of their new responsibilities. Finally, I should like to warmly welcome the new colleagues in our midst and pledge them my delegation's readiness for good and fruitful co-operation. Let me also thank State Secretary Ferenc Somogyi from Hungary for his interesting and thought-provoking statement made just now.

This session of the Geneva Conference is taking place against the background of remarkable changes. Radical changes and dynamic developments are going on. Barriers are withering away. New links are being forged. What is at stake is peace through disarmament and the shift from confrontation to inter-system co-operation. New security structures are needed.

It is with justified hope that all forces that really desire arms limitation and disarmament, security and co-operation are setting their sights on Geneva. The German Democratic Republic also maintains that 1990 must become the year of disarmament. Let us not allow the disarmament process to lag behind political developments. Let us keep up the challenge in disarmament policy. Let us keep to the agreement that multilateral disarmament negotiations can only be conducted in the context of the international climate. And this climate has undoubtedly improved. This is corroborated by the fact that concrete results are within reach in the Soviet-American negotiations on the halving of their strategic offensive weapons. The headway made in the Vienna negotiations on conventional armed forces and armaments is encouraging. Their dynamic continuation nurtures the hope that the first round will be concluded soon, yielding positive results.

Prolonged negotiations on the verification protocols to the Soviet-American agreements of 1974 and 1976 are drawing to a close. We welcome this, and look forward to their ratification in the near future.

With the agreements reached in Ottawa on the "open skies" régime, a new element has been added to the disarmament process. The day before yesterday, the Soviet Union and the United States resumed their bilateral negotiations on chemical weapons. We expect this round to produce decisive impetus for the earliest conclusion of the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Finally, the results of the forty-fourth United Nations General Assembly session are on the Conference table.

Of course, one cannot speak of spectacular breakthroughs. But it would be just as wrong to underestimate what has been achieved at this General Assembly session. In our opinion, steps have definitely been taken in the right direction. The resolutions on a chemical weapons ban, in the nuclear field, on the use of science and technology for disarmament and on the issue of defensive security concepts offer a good many starting-points for the work of our Conference. The Vienna seminar on military doctrines reveals what relevance attaches to the last-named resolution of the forty-fourth United Nations General Assembly Session. We share the view already expressed in the course of our debate that the Geneva Conference should join in this international discussion, too.

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As a member of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament for 15 years now, the German Democratic Republic has made a distinctive contribution to making peace more secure and advancing arms limitation and disarmament. It will continue to act along these lines. In autumn last year, a sweeping process of renewal was embarked upon in our country. All-embracing democratization is unfolding. This democratization is an act of self-determination; it cannot be brought in from outside. Let us do everything that strengthens sober-minded, balanced and worthy action and counteracts instability in the field of security and disarmament. Thus, the process of democratization opens up new opportunities in establishing a system of democratic and demilitarized international relations.

The German Democratic Republic is implementing the unilateral disarmament measures announced in 1989, which can be publicly supervised. By the end of 1990, the army of the German Democratic Republic will be reduced by 10,000 troops, 600 tanks and 50 combat aircraft. And that is not all. As from 26 January this year, in addition, another 35,000 to 40,000 army members will retire from the army in connection with the transition to 12-month military service. Two days ago a law was passed on service without arms - that means an alternative national service. The defence budget will shrink by at least 10 per cent. What is more, a new national military doctrine for the German Democratic Republic is under discussion. The state of drafting reflects the consensus reached with all social forces in our country. The parliament of the German Democratic Republic will shortly deal with this important document.

This I think bears witness to the fact that we are persistently and resolutely working towards a weapon-free world. We hope that these disarmament initiatives will have a mobilizing effect, and that the process of disarmament now under way will receive strong impulses from all sides.

All this goes to show that the year 1990 has made a promising start. Now let us contribute our share to ensure that it does, in fact, become the year of disarmament. What could serve this aim better than completing the convention banning chemical weapons? The German Democratic Republic has, without ifs and buts, pronounced itself in favour of the global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons. It figures among those States which have declared that they do not possess chemical weapons, and applies strict export controls to dual-purpose chemicals.

We stand committed to the agreements reached in Paris and to the outcome of the Canberra Conference. We are in favour of making 1990 the crucial year in concluding a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, as well as on their destruction. What encourages us in this endeavour is the joint Soviet-American statement on chemical weapons recently agreed in Moscow, as well as the readiness of the USSR and the United States to start reducing chemical weapons before the entry into force of the convention outlawing them. Furthermore, we are encouraged by the Soviet Declaration on cessation of the production of chemical weapons, and hope that this will not remain a unilateral move. We feel encouraged by the mandate of the CW Committee agreed upon some days ago here in this forum.

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And, last but not least, we are encouraged by the report on the current state of negotiations presented on Tuesday. The outgoing Chairman of the CW Committee, Ambassador Morel, deserves our appreciation and gratitude for his committed and creative guidance of the negotiations.

The time seems ripe to get down to the final drafting of the convention - i.e. to focus work on the still outstanding essentials and on completing the articles. They encompass, in our view, verification measures, the order of destruction of chemical weapons and their production facilities, agreements on assistance in the event of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons as well as in economic and technological development, the definition of chemical weapons and the composition of the future executive council of the organization. A good many expandable starting-points were provided in the informal consultations on such key issues last year.

Now we think it is imperative to take decisions. It will certainly be no easy job, but it will be possible. As experience in other disarmament forums shows, a meeting of the Geneva Disarmament Conference at foreign minister level would be appropriate to give a powerful boost in this regard. An informal discussion on this matter would be worth while.

The provisions to be agreed on the verification of a chemical weapons ban are of special interest. In our opinion, such a verification system should, first, reliably guarantee that no chemical weapons are produced and that they will never be developed again. Secondly, it must be cost-effective and ensure reliable verification with the most efficient means. Thirdly, it must be feasible. And fourthly it should not lay unnecessary burdens on the chemical industry. Legitimate scientific, technological and commercial interests need to be taken into account.

Challenge inspections in cases of violation of the agreements have occupied a central spot in the disarmament accords at least since the conclusion of the INF Treaty. They constitute an important element of confidence-building and effective verification. This also goes for the prohibition of chemical weapons, for which the German Democratic Republic is ready to agree to radical verification provisions. We think that efforts are already needed, at the national level too, to determine which legislative and administrative measures can ensure that the comprehensive obligations under the convention are fulfilled correctly and on schedule. In the end, all efforts towards a chemical weapons ban hinge on a world-wide consensus that precludes any use of chemical weapons, stops their production and proliferation and reliably guarantees their complete destruction within a period of 10 years. If this was actually achieved, it would fulfil, at long last, a demand which the peoples raised 75 years ago under the spell of the lethal gas cloud of Ypres.

Regarding nuclear disarmament, there are several urgent issues that remain pending. The year 1990 offers a chance to generate momentum in these subjects. All are awaiting a treaty on 50 per cent reductions in Soviet and American strategic offensive weapons. And all are expecting agreements between the USSR and the United States on substantial cuts in the number and yield of their nuclear test explosions. A conference on the extension of

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the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty to underground testing is in the offing. In September the fourth review conference on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is to be held. My country supports these initiatives.

We also consider that the Geneva Conference on Disarmament should pull its weight and concentrate henceforth on the substantive issues pertaining to a nuclear test ban, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Is it not opportune now to establish a committee of this conference dealing with all aspects related to a test ban - especially since almost all members have come out in favour of it? I should like to assure Ambassador Donowaki of Japan of our delegation's unqualified support in his endeavours towards this end.

The German Democratic Republic advocates an immediate ban on nuclear weapon tests. It was in this spirit that our delegation submitted a working paper on the verification of a nuclear test ban. The Group of Scientific Experts has carried out important spadework for a verification system to monitor compliance with a comprehensive nuclear test ban. We believe it is time to clarify the aspects of such a system that go beyond seismological questions in an appropriate forum - be it a new expert group or a GSE enlarged by an amended mandate.

At this juncture, I call to mind the proposal to hold at least a structured debate on the questions associated with the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, I recall the proposal made by the German Democratic Republic that we should begin with the elaboration of principles governing nuclear disarmament. In our view the Soviet proposal on cessation of the production of fissionable material merits being considered in depth by the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. I think this shows that there is really no lack of substance in the discussions on nuclear issues in our Conference.

In the field of the prevention of an arms race in outer space too we are carrying many problems into the 1990s. Rapid and serious steps are urgently needed now to diminish these deficiencies. Thanks to the committed work of Ambassador Bayart, Chairman of the outer space Committee, a considerable number of proposals lie on the table. The German Democratic Republic is prepared to hold discussions in an intensive manner, with experts being involved. Far-reaching understanding seems to exist in terms of the usefulness of confidence-building measures. Here we have in mind the proposals made by France, Canada, the USSR, the Federal Republic of Germany and Poland. The same holds true for the proposals advanced by socialist States and non-aligned countries concerning agreements on the prohibition of anti-satellite weapons and other space weapons. The German Democratic Republic has repeatedly taken initiatives in this field, and intends to develop them further.

Winding up my statement, I would like to say a word concerning the future work of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. I believe that Ambassador de Azambuja and Ambassador de Rivero rightly turned to this issue some days ago. As we all know, the question is to fully explore the possibilities and potentials of this unique multilateral disarmament body to

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render it more effective and to strengthen its authority. We deem it imperative to adjust the Conference to the requirements of the 1990s. Rapid developments are going on everywhere. New priorities are taking shape. In our view, this calls for analysing what has been achieved to date, surmounting impediments, continuing what has proved positive and responding to anything new. The current agenda mirrors the consensus reached years ago. But since then we have acquired a good deal of experience. Would it not also be worthwhile today, for example, addressing such questions as maritime confidence-building measures or nuclear risk reduction? At all events we should try to identify joint points of departure, in whatever form and forum, which ought to be put on the agenda today and which are negotiable.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his statement, and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya, Ambassador Ogada.

Mr. OGADA (Kenya): Mr. President, accept my warm congratulations on taking up the office of President of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of February 1990. The Kenyan delegation recognizes that your experience in international diplomacy will immensely benefit the work of this Conference. In the course of this month you have been able to solve some difficult issues pertaining to the work of this Conference and for this, credit must be accorded to you. Your country, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, a country with which Kenya enjoys cordial relations, has demonstrated in words and deeds her commitment to disarmament and arms control objectives. I also thank the distinguished Ambassador El Ghali Benhima of the Kingdom of Morocco for having successfully presided over the Conference during the month of August 1989 and the inter-sessional period. Today the Conference is graced with the presence of the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary, whose statement we have listened to with keen attention.

As I am speaking in this Conference for the first time, I welcome the Ambassadors who have recently assumed their duties in the Conference, namely Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Gerald Shannon of Canada, Ambassador Hou Zhitong of China, Ambassador José Pérez Novoa of Cuba, Ambassador Mitsuro Donowaki of Japan, Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico, Ambassador Stephen Ledogar of the United States of America and Ambassador Horacio Arteaga of Venezuela. I would like to assure them of the co-operation of my delegation in the work of this Conference.

The Kenya delegation has taken note of the departure of Ambassador Marchand, Ambassador Taylhardat, Ambassador Friedersdorf and Ambassador García Robles. The achievements and interest of Ambassador García Robles in the field of disarmament have been widely acclaimed, and the Kenya delegation would like to pay homage to his unyielding commitment to disarmament objectives. We wish all the ambassadors who have left the Conference success in their future activities.

Before commenting on issues which directly touch on the work of this Conference I would like to hail the release of Nelson Mandela as a significant step in the fight to abolish apartheid in South Africa. Tribute must be paid

(Mr. Ogada, Kenya)

to this man of great stature who has suffered for so long to liberate all South Africans (Black, Brown and White). We salute his courage and determination to eradicate apartheid.

The Conference on Disarmament commenced its annual session for 1990 amidst very dramatic transformations in international affairs. The past year witnessed a radical change in various parts of the world. The political events that have manifested themselves, if they take hold, promise to contribute immensely to an improved climate in international peace and security. These transformations that have become the reality of the day are leading to a new international order which it is expected will be founded on trust and co-operation rather than on mistrust and confrontation. To be candid, the management of international affairs through the latter approach has only made the condition of the world worse. In the past, before these new changes occurred, immense resources had to be diverted to sustain policies of confrontation rather than being invested in policies which promoted peace and stability. The emerging new order on the international scene promises to promote relations between States, especially the two super-Powers, to the long-desired level of positive co-operation and mutual trust in their affairs.

Ever since the end of the Second World War, the world has been burdened with the accumulation of many weapons, including weapons of mass destruction. Of course, we realize that the international politics at the time necessitated continued accumulation of such weapons, especially by the two super-Powers and their allies in the opposing military alliances that they each belong to. The spectre of a third world war, as a result of the military build-up of NATO and Warsaw Pact countries, was a constant fear not only in Europe, where the highest concentration of nuclear and conventional weapons is found, but also all over the world.

At the moment, with the political changes that have occurred, the threat of a global nuclear conflict is receding. Today, issues that were a taboo in the past are being discussed openly and solutions to them are being earnestly considered. The ideological divisions and other barriers that separated countries in Europe are coming down, and it can only be hoped that a stable and permanent peace will prevail in this region based on a mechanism acceptable to all concerned with the peace and security of Europe.

Peace and security are desired objectives in all regions of the world, and it would be regrettable if, at a time when Europe is witnessing moves towards conventional and nuclear disarmament, the stockpiling of arms in other parts of the world were to occur as a result of the acquisition of a variety of offensive military weapons. Many of these regions are faced with difficult political, socio-economic, environmental and other problems, and should be allowed all the necessary means to solve these problems without resort to military confrontation and unnecessary external arms supplies. In other words, the transfer of problems associated with various types of weapons from one region to another would be a blow to the attainment of international peace and security.

(Mr. Ogada, Kenya)

With the evident changes that have occurred, some of which have a direct bearing on the work and character of this Conference, it may be necessary for the Conference on Disarmament to redefine itself in response to these changes. The Conference continues to faithfully observe rules and practices which, in the light of these changes, could be interpreted as being out of step with the current reality. If the Conference is to avoid the criticism that it is alienated from the reality of the current world situation it should allow itself to reflect, in an appropriate manner, the political changes that have taken place as well as the practical successes that have been achieved in bilateral and regional negotiations on issues which touch on some of the specific items on the Conference's agenda.

Undoubtedly, the Conference has invested its energies in efforts to work out a convention banning chemical weapons with some tangible results. In the past year the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Pierre Morel of France was able to make progress on a number of outstanding issues relating to inspection guidelines, legal and technical issues and the other organs to be associated with the convention, as well as some highly political issues like challenge inspection.

The proposed convention is clearly taking shape, and it cannot be denied that the Paris international conference prohibiting chemical weapons and the Canberra Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons have had a positive impact on the deliberations of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. My delegation would like to join those delegations that have already thanked Ambassador Morel and those who worked closely with him for their indefatigable efforts in advancing the work of the Ad hoc Committee. The quality of the present draft text of the convention banning chemical weapons indicates that the day is not far off when the convention will be ready for conclusion.

Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden has taken up the chairmanship of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. We are convinced that he will be able to conduct the work of this subsidiary body to the satisfaction of all delegations, and that this may be the year the Ad hoc Committee reaches the finishing-line in its work to conclude the long-awaited convention prohibiting chemical weapons. Of course, this would require the extensive consideration of all outstanding issues, including those pointed out in the statement of the Group of 21 that was made in the plenary of this Conference on 6 February this year. We would like to wish Ambassador Hyltenius success in the tasks lying ahead of him.

It is understandable that the Conference on Disarmament has devoted so much of its time to the activities of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. The promise of a convention banning these hideous weapons spurs the Conference to focus its attention almost exclusively on this issue. It is to be hoped that this promise will hold to avoid disappointment and frustration within the Conference.

(Mr. Ogada, Kenya)

The joint United States-USSR statement declaring that the two super-Powers are ready to undertake practical bilateral action with respect to the elimination of chemical weapons is certainly welcome news, and will no doubt benefit the work of the Ad hoc Committee. However, it should be remembered that the Conference has identified nuclear disarmament as a priority objective. Yet on issues related to nuclear disarmament the Conference has made little headway. At a time when the two super-Powers have signed and implemented an agreement eliminating a category of nuclear weapons, and when favourable prospects exist for their signing a treaty eliminating 50 per cent of their strategic nuclear forces, the efforts of this Conference to deal with nuclear disarmament issues have stagnated.

No other single action could demonstrate the commitment of States to nuclear disarmament better than the achievement of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. We are aware of the great efforts that have been made towards establishing an ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban, and the commendable role played by the delegation of Japan in this regard. We commend Ambassador Donowaki for agreeing to continue the efforts already initiated by his predecessor on this important issue. This is a good sign which indicates the undiminished interest of delegations on this specific issue.

We do remember that on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty, a treaty which prohibits the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, some members of this Conference rightly proposed an amendment conference to expand the Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty by prohibiting underground nuclear tests. This amendment conference, we have been informed, will take place early next year. The fact that more than a third of the States parties to this partial test-ban Treaty supported the request for an amendment conference is a clear political indication that many countries are willing to exploit any avenue that could possibly lead to the realization of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. My delegation does not see the aims of the amendment conference on the nuclear test ban issue as conflicting with those of the Conference on Disarmament, but as moving parallel to each other.

An event that will take place later this year and is also related to the nuclear test ban issue is the proposed fourth conference to review the non-proliferation Treaty. In this Treaty, the nuclear-weapon States parties to it assumed certain obligations which were expected to be fulfilled in good faith. The obligations assumed by the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT have been evidently fulfilled. One of the obligations assumed by the nuclear-weapon States was the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time, and the continuation of negotiations to this end. This and other obligations undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States have yet to be fulfilled. Naturally, it is expected that a host of questions on the unfulfilled obligations contained in the non-proliferation Treaty will be presented during the fourth review conference. It is hoped that answers to these questions will be convincing, as they will have a bearing on the 1995 conference to determine the future of this treaty, which has to a large extent served the international community adequately in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Ogada, Kenya)

Nuclear disarmament is another very important obligation that the nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT undertook on acceding to it. Some steps at the bilateral level have been taken towards nuclear disarmament, but the process is far from over. Nuclear weapons continue to be in the arsenals of States both within this treaty and outside it. Perhaps with the process of change already taking place in the world, and bearing in mind the achievements of the United States-USSR bilateral negotiations on nuclear weapons, it would be important to review the role of nuclear weapons in the present world military and political situation.

I would like to underline that, in relation to the NPT and this forum also, non-nuclear-weapon States will continue their reasonable demand for the nuclear-weapon States to provide them with assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, in an internationally legally binding instrument, pending the total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The Conference on Disarmament should exploit the opportunity presented by the international situation so as to realize progress in its work. At no other time in the history of this Conference has the international climate been so favourable to positive deliberations in the Conference as this year. Therefore let us be part of these historic changes and not remain impassively outside them.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Kenya for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers today. Does any other member wish to take the floor? It seems not.

I should like to inform you that we have received additional requests from non-members for participation in the work of the Conference. Three requests have been circulated this week and, if there are no objections, we shall take them all up together at our next plenary meeting on Tuesday 27 February.

I have no other business for this plenary meeting, and I now intend to adjourn it. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday 27 February, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.